Shortage of telephone cables in Gujarat

4964. SHR1RAJU PARMAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any shortage of telephone cables in Gujarat;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) by when, this shortage is likely to be met?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATISUMTTRA MAHAJ AN): (a) There was some shortage of underground cable in Gujarat Telecom circle with respect to the Switching Capacity added during 2001-2002 and 2002-2003, but the work of releasing New Telephone Connections was not held up.

(b) The shortage of cable was due to non-acceptance of complete tendered quantity by the bidders in the tender invited for procurement of cables during 2002-03 and also due to abnormal delay in supply of cable by M/s HCL (Hindustan Cables Limited) ordered during 2001-02.

(c) Cables were received during January to March, 2003 and as on 01 - 04-2003,8.465 LCKM (Lakh Conductor Kilo Meter) cable was available in stock and 8.7 LCKM cable was in pipe line. The cable laying works are in progress in various SS As (Secondary Switching Area) and now work is not held up for want of cable in Gujarat Telecom circle.

BSNL's basic services

4965. SHRINILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a substantial number of subscribers are opting out of the BSNL's basic services;

(b) if so, the details for the last two years, year-wise and profile of these subscribers, usage-wise and classification-wise e.g., rural, urban and metro;

(c) whether any study has been made to find out the reasons therefor, and

(d) the number of subscribers added to the BSNL's basic services during the corresponding period indicating comparative pattern in terms of usage and classification?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATISUMTRAMAHAJAN): (a) No, Sir. Subscribers are not opting out of the BSNL's basic services. But there are 13.44 lakh disconnections/surrenders of telephones during 2001-02 and 17.94 lakh during 2002-03 due to following reasons:

- Compulsory filing of Income Tax return, which has now been removed by the Government.
- Switching over from landline to cellular and WLL phones.
- Surrendering of extra telephones due to improved availability and reliability of phones.
- Recession in economy and other financial reasons.
- Closure of firms.
- Shifting/transfer of customers to other places.
- Surrender of OYT and Tatkal Category telephones to get refund of deposit on account of improved availability of telephones in general category.
- Personal reasons. (Death, Retirement, Marriage etc.)

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) A study for disconnections/surrenders of telephones will be undertaken after empanelment of marketing research agencies, which is in process.

(d) The number of subscribers added to the BSNL's basic services during the last two years 2001 -02 and 2002-03 for rural, urban and metro are as under:

Year	Rural	Urban	Metro	Total
2001-02	23.31	25.76	1.88	50.95
2002-03	19.73	01.70	0.70	22.13
TOTAL	43.04	27.46	2.58	73.08

Extension of Local call distance limit

†4966. SHRI MUNAVVAR HASAN : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND rNFORMATIONTECHNOLOGY bepleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.